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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Committee on Appropriations**  
**Washington, DC 20515-6015**

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April 1, 2011

CLERK AND STAFF DIRECTOR  
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President Barack Obama  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Recent events across northern Africa and the Middle East demonstrate the powerful effect that the prospect of self-government and basic human rights can have on an oppressed population. Governments have fallen and nations have changed, all in the name of freedom. Operation Odyssey Dawn (now Unified Protector), based on United Nations Security Council Resolution 1973, is another chapter in this remarkable story that history is writing before us.

The Members of the House Defense Subcommittee on Appropriations stand ready to support our brave men and women in uniform as they carry out their mission, but it is essential that we know precisely what that mission is, and what role U.S. troops have in achieving that mission. For example, enforcement of a no-fly-zone is one thing, but the use of AC-130 gunships and A-10 aircraft denote an entirely different battle. And without knowing what goals we hope to achieve, our long-term commitment is unclear. Indeed, as history has taught us, without defined goals or objectives the probability of an open-ended campaign increases. As our nation continues to struggle through the current fiscal crisis, an exit strategy seems all the more prudent. There was, however, little to no consultation with Congress prior to these actions, and almost two weeks after our first engagement, many of these concerns remain unaddressed.

The Department of Defense has indicated that through March 28, they spent approximately \$550 million in support of Operation Odyssey Dawn; and they expect to spend at a minimum another \$40 million a month as we continue to support the now NATO-led Operation Unified Protector. This assumes a reduced U.S. role, which could change significantly if NATO requires additional support. It was also made clear that there would be no additional funds requested by your Administration, either in the form of a supplemental request or a budget amendment. In fact, you stated that the costs of this mission could be paid for out of previously appropriated funds. As this Committee works to finish fiscal year 2011 and begins work on fiscal year 2012, I feel it is imperative that we know where you believe these funds will come from. Based on the above Department of Defense rate, costs for fiscal year 2011 could reach \$800 million, and depending on the length of our commitment, another \$500 million in fiscal year 2012. I do not need to remind you that the Department of

Defense fiscal year 2012 request is already \$13 billion below where it was estimated it would be just a year ago—the reduction taken in the name of efficiencies.

As the nation's military continue to serve in harm's way, I feel it is imperative we proceed with complete openness and transparency. I pledge that I will continue to do everything I can to support these soldiers, sailors, Marines, and airmen, as I have done throughout my career, and I ask for your help and support in doing the same.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Bill Young", written over the word "Sincerely,".

C. W. Bill Young  
Chairman  
Defense Subcommittee